United Nations

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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Security Council recommends to General Assembly admission of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania to United Nations membership.

- Executive Chairman of Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament says that while the Commission made progress, it did not receive full cooperation in major areas of its work.

- Preparatory Committee for 1993 World Conference on Human Rights seeks opportunity to rethink United Nations human rights policy and budget.

- Transparency and openness to reinforce mutual confidence-building measures between States is stressed in Third Review Conference of States parties to Biological Weapons Convention.

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The Security Council this morning decided without a vote to recommend to the General Assembly that it admit the three Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, as members of the United Nations.

The final decision to admit the three Republics will be taken at the General Assembly's forty-sixth session due to begin on Tuesday, 17 September.

In a statement at the meeting, Council President, Jean-Bernard Merimée of France said the Council's decision was of great symbolic and historic importance. He said, "we are entering a world where perhaps there is less order, but where there is ever more hope".

Last month, the Security Council recommended for admission to the United Nations four States — the two Koreas and the two Pacific States of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands. The admission of the seven new countries will bring to 166 the total number of United Nations Member States.

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For information media—not an official record

The Executive Chairman of the Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament, Ambassador Rolf Ekeus, told correspondents yesterday that while inspections had made some progress, the Commission did not receive full cooperation in major areas of its work.

He said the Commission was trying to understand how all the different Iraqi military activities interrelated in what he called an Iraqi "masterplan". Inspections were continuing in order to gain full disclosure of all Iraqi military capabilities.

Mr. Ekeus went on to say that the Commission needed helicopters to carry out flights over Iraq as mandated by Security Council resolution 707 (1991) and for destruction of weapons in areas remote from Baghdad. The German Government had provided the Commission with three helicopters with a full crew. Mr. Ekeus noted that he considered the Iraqi proposal to offer the use of its own helicopters as inappropriate because of the need for surprise visits and for short notice activities.

The question of the Special Commission's use of helicopters was discussed by members of the Security Council during consultations on Tuesday, following allegations that Iraqi authorities had refused to allow an inspection team to fly its helicopters over an Iraqi weapon site.

Meanwhile, it was announced at headquarters yesterday that a Special Commission inspection team had recently returned from carrying out the fourth in a continuing series of inspections of Iraq's chemical weapon capabilities.

A United Nations official told correspondents that the team was assigned two main tasks during the inspection period of 1 to 4 September, including a survey at a chemical weapon site at Al Muthanna State Establishment, and the destruction at that site of unfilled munitions found during a previous inspection of the site. The official said that both tasks were successfully achieved and that in addition, a number of filled chemical munitions including some SCUD missile warheads were moved to Al Muthanna where they were being collected for eventual destruction.

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The 1993 World Conference on Human Rights would provide an opportunity to rethink United Nations policy in the field of human rights, the Chairman of the United Nations Subcommission on Minorities, Louis Joinet, told the Committee preparing for the Conference, yesterday in Geneva.

Mr. Joinet, human rights expert from France, asked whether the conference would be able to make credible proposals if the portion of the United Nations budget devoted to human rights remained at 0.7 per cent. He spoke to the Committee as it continued to debate proposals regarding the agenda, rules of procedure, venue and participation at the high-level Conference.

Also addressing the Committee, yesterday, Shun Chetty of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), said that from a

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human rights perspective the element of coercion in any refugee movement was most troubling. The right to freedom of movement in relation to one's own country was denied when a refugee was compelled to leave or denied the right to return.

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Participants in the Third Review Conference of the States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention are currently continuing the general debate in Geneva on the implementation and operation of the Convention.

Two Review Conferences of the Biological Weapons Convention have already been held. They took place in Geneva in 1980 and in 1986. To date, there are 118 States parties adhering to the Convention, which prohibits the development, production and stockpiling of bacteriological (biological) and toxic weapons and calls for their destruction.

Yesterday, speakers stressed the importance of transparency and openness to reinforce mutual confidence-building measures between States. In turn, this openness would help to prevent global proliferation of biological weapons and lay to rest concerns that new technology could be misused for weapons purposes.

On Tuesday, 10 September, some States parties recommended during the debate that an ad hoc group of scientific and technical experts entrusted with the task of verification should be convened. The group, which should be accessible to experts of all States parties, should also be able to suggest options for verification and compliance procedures, it was suggested.

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